



NEWS RELEASE

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Iowa Finance Authority and Iowa Association of Realtors® Announce Winner of \$5,000 in Statewide When A House Becomes A Home Contest

*Summer homeownership contest aims to celebrate homeownership success
and bring awareness of benefits, resources*

BRITT – The Iowa Finance Authority and Iowa Association of Realtors® today announced the winners of the statewide summer When a House becomes a Home contest are Ben and Becca Kraus of Britt. The contest sought Iowans' homeownership success stories and the Kraus' entry was deemed the public's favorite, garnering a grand prize of a \$5,000 Lowe's gift card.

The When a House becomes a Home Contest encouraged Iowans to share how homeownership made their dreams come true. Participants were asked to write how they made their house a home in 140 words or less, and support the entry with a video or photo.

The entries were scored by a panel of judges and the public voted for their favorite of the ten finalists on Facebook to determine the winner.

Ben and Becca Kraus' winning entry detailed how they had overcome medical obstacles and recently fulfilled their dream of homeownership. Their entry received a total of 716 votes to win the statewide contest.

The Kraus' Realtor® and lender were also recognized. Renee Diemer of Diemer Realty in Britt and Chip Thiedeman of Clear Lake Bank in Garner helped the Kraus' realize their dream of homeownership. Both Diemer and Thiedeman helped present the \$5,000 home improvement award to their client.

"We were pleased by the results of this contest, with well over 100 entries from Iowans and nearly 3,000 votes being logged over the week voting period," said Dave Jamison, Iowa Finance Authority Executive Director. "I would like to congratulate Ben and Becca on their winning entry and am proud to be able to present them with a \$5,000 gift card for their next project."

"Homeownership is truly the American dream, and this partnership in creating a homeownership contest highlights the benefits of owning a home and making it your own," said Brian Carlson, Regional Vice President of the Iowa Association of Realtors®.

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Winning Entry: Our life got turned upside down around 5 years ago when Ben was diagnosed with cancer. He fought for his life and won, when he was told he wouldn't make it. He is now a cancer survivor and we have both graduated college and starting our dream jobs as an Occupational Therapist and Nurse. This whole experience has pushed us to be better people and help others when they are at their worst. Our next step was to find our dream house and purchase our first home. To be able to afford a house with our school and medical debt, we bought a house that needs quite a bit of work. By voting for us and helping us win this contest, we will be able to bring this house out of the 80's and make it OUR home. [Video](#)